

PROPOSAL SUMMARY

APPLICANT: Manna Food

PROJECT: Smart Sacks Backpack

AMOUNT: \$5,000

TYPE: Public Service

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Manna Food Center will implement a Smart Sacks program to low-income elementary school students in Rockville who are facing the harsh reality of childhood hunger. Manna Food Center will partner with local businesses or civic organizations to provide 164 hungry children at five Rockville Elementary Schools with a backpack full of kid-friendly, nutritious food each week.

Participating schools are:

Beall Elementary
College Garden Elementary
Maryvale Elementary
Meadow Hall Elementary
Twinbrook Elementary

Each of the 164 students at these Rockville elementary schools has been identified by the Linkages to Learning staff and each student is enrolled in the free or reduced price lunch (FARMS), a true indication of the poverty these students face.

Smart Sacks is a perfect example of how a community comes together to solve a problem. It is truly a collaborative effort that brings several community partners together to fight childhood hunger and an important component to break the cycle of hunger and poverty. Children who participate in Smart Sacks are better able to succeed in school. Teachers have remarked that children come to school on Mondays full of energy that they lacked before participating in Smart Sacks. Parents of children in the Smart Sacks program are more involved in their children's school, which is an unanticipated but welcome outcome. Support from Rockville Community Development Block Grant will help Manna to expand its highly successful Smart Sacks program to fight childhood hunger in Rockville.